



Monmouth County Regional Health Commission No. 1

Summer 2011

Don't Get Burned! Summer Sun Safety Tips

While summer means fun in the sun, make sure you're not getting too much of a good thing. The Centers for Disease Control recommends easy options for sun protection:

Sunscreen

- Use sunscreen with sun protective factor (SPF) 15 or higher, and both UVA and UVB protection. Sunscreen wears off. Put it on again if you stay out in the sun for more than two hours, and after you swim or do things that make you sweat. Check the sunscreen's expiration date. Sunscreen without an expiration date has a shelf life of no more than three years, but its shelf life is shorter if it has been exposed to high temperatures.

Clothing

- Loose fitting long-sleeved shirts and long pants made from tightly woven fabric offer the best protection from the sun's UV rays. A wet T-shirt offers much less UV protection than a dry one. Darker colors may offer more protection than lighter colors.

Hats

- Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade the face, head, ears, and neck. For the most protection, wear a hat with a brim all the way around that shades your face, ears, and the back of your neck. A tightly woven fabric, such as canvas, works best to protect your skin from UV rays. Avoid straw hats with holes that let sunlight through. A darker hat may offer more UV protection. If you wear a baseball cap, you should also protect your ears and the back of your neck by wearing clothing that covers those areas.

Sunglasses

- Sunglasses protect your eyes from UV rays and reduce the risk of cataracts. They also protect the tender skin around your eyes from sun exposure. Wear sunglasses that wrap around and block as close to 100% of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.

Shade

- You can reduce your risk of skin damage and skin cancer by seeking shade under an umbrella, tree, or other shelter before you need relief from the sun. Your best bet to protect your skin is to use sunscreen or wear protective clothing when you're outside—even when you're in the shade.

Pets in the cars: Summer Heat

Summer is a time for both you and your pet to enjoy the great outdoors, but warm weather also presents a number of situations that can endanger your pet. Here's some tips for pet owners to keep their furry friends safe this summer:

- When it is hot, extra care needs to be taken with older dogs, short-nosed dogs, and those with thick coats.
- On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours. Keep in mind that asphalt gets very hot and can burn your pet's paws.
- Another summertime threat is fleas and ticks. Use only flea and tick treatments recommended by your veterinarian. Some over-the-counter flea and tick products can be toxic, even when used according to instructions.
- Pets can get sunburned too, and your pet may require sunscreen on his or her nose and ear tips.
- Don't take your pets to crowded summer events such as concerts or fairs. The loud noises and crowds, combined with the heat, can be stressful and dangerous for pets. For your pet's well being, leave her at home.

Food Safety in the Summer!

During warm weather, it is especially important to take extra precautions and practice safe food handling when preparing perishable foods such as meat, poultry, seafood and egg products. The warmer weather conditions provide a perfect environment for bacteria and other pathogens in food to multiply rapidly and cause foodborne illness. Follow the suggestions below to reduce the risk of foodborne illness this summer.

- **Wash, Wash, Wash Your Hands.** Always wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food.
- **Marinating Mandate.** Always marinate food in the refrigerator. Don't use sauce that was used to marinate raw meat or poultry on cooked food. Instead, reserve a portion of the unused marinade to use as a sauce.
- **Hot, Hot, Hot.** When grilling foods, preheat the coals on your grill for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the coals are lightly coated with ash.
- **Temperature Gauge.** Use a food thermometer to ensure that food reaches a safe internal temperature.
- **Where's the Beef? Chicken and Fish? Hamburgers** should be cooked to 160 °F, while large cuts of beef such as roasts and steaks may be cooked to 145 °F for medium rare or to 160 °F for medium. Poultry must reach a temperature of 165 °F. Fish should be opaque and flake easily.
- **Stay Away from that Same Old Plate.** When taking foods off the grill, do not put cooked food items back on the same plate that held raw food, unless it has been washed with hot water and soap first. And in hot weather (above 90°F) foods should never sit out for more than one hour before going in the refrigerator.
- **Icebox Etiquette.** A full cooler will maintain its cold temperatures longer than one that is partially filled so it is important to pack plenty of extra ice or freezer packs to ensure a constant cold temperature. Keep the cooler out of the direct sun. Keep drinks in a separate cooler from foods. The beverage cooler will be opened frequently while the food cooler stays cold.

Prevent Mosquitoes Breeding: Control Standing Water

Regardless of recent weather patterns - wet, dry, warm, or cool - there are plenty of potential places in which mosquitoes can develop. The most effective way to reduce the number of mosquitoes around homes and neighborhoods is to find and eliminate their breeding sites - standing water. There are effective steps that individuals can take to minimize mosquito breeding:

- Dispose of old tires, buckets, aluminum cans, plastic sheeting or other refuse that can hold water.
- Empty accumulated water from trash cans, wheel barrows, outside pet dishes, and flower pot bottoms. If possible, turn these items over when they are not in use.
- Clean debris from rain gutters and unclog obstructed downspouts. Clogged rain gutters are one of the most overlooked breeding sites for mosquitoes around homes.
- Remove any standing water on flat roofs or around structures.
- Repair leaking faucets and air conditioners that produce puddles for several days.
- Change water in bird baths and wading pools at least once a week and keep swimming pools cleaned and chlorinated.
- Ornamental pools can be aerated or stocked with mosquito-eating fish. Water movement helps because mosquitoes prefer quiet, non-flowing water for egg-laying and development.
- Fill or drain ditches and swampy areas, and other soil depressions and remove, drain, or fill tree holes and stumps with mortar or sealant to prevent accumulation of water.
- Eliminate standing water and seepage around animal watering troughs, cisterns, and septic tanks. Be sure that cistern screens are intact and that access covers fit tightly.
- Irrigate lawns and gardens carefully to prevent water from standing for several days.